

An Overview of the Adventure of Meaning of Concept of Messiah within the Covenant Tradition*

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ABSTRACT

The concept of Messiah a basically reformed in Judaism and Christianity is the principal matter of this paper. This concept that was outlined by more humanely worries can be found in many cultures. Nonetheless the main purpose is to evaluate it only chronologically from Judaism to Islam, that is to say, the Covenant Tradition. It is tried to clearly understand that which kind of transformation been faced about it and on the other hand what is approach of Holy Qur'ān the last ring of the revelation to this concept's adventure throughout history and which imagination can be true in terms of Qur'ān. Consequently, it can be accepted that the concept of Messiah has been as an important sample of instrument for disregarding human nature.

KEYWORDS

Kalām, Messiah, Human Being, Judaism, Christianity, Islam

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Ahit Geleneğindeki Mesih Kavramının Anlam Serüvenine Genel Bir Bakış

ÖZ

Temel olarak Yahudilik ve Hristiyanlıkta teşekkül ettirilen Mesih kavramı bu makalenin ana temasıdır. Daha ziyade insani kaygılarla çerçevesi çizilen bu kavrama birçok kültürde rastlanmakla birlikte bunun, yalnızca ahit geleneği diyebileceğimiz Yahudilikten başlayıp Müslümanlığa doğru kronolojik bir perspektifte ele alınması temel amaçtır. Bu süreçte, özellikle Yahudi ve Hristiyan toplulukların karşılaştığı ciddi sorunlar neticesinde Mesih anlayışının ne tür bir evrimleşme geçirdiği, vahiy geleneğinin son halkası olan Kur'an-ı Kerim'in ise söz konusu serüvene ilişkin yaklaşımı ve nasıl bir tasavvuru salık verdiği anlaşılmaya gayret edilecektir. Sonuç itibarıyla insan tabiatının görmezden gelinerek iradi ve ameli bir varoluşun önünün alınmasına önemli bir örnek olarak Mesih kavramının kullanıldığı düşünülmektedir.

ANAHTAR KELİMELELER

Kelâm, Mesih, İnsan, Yahudilik, Hristiyanlık, İslam

INTRODUCTION

The word “Messiah”, which is derived from the verb “مسح” that means rubbing with hand and cleaning by patting with water,¹ literally means “anointed one” that refers someone’s being oiled to become a king or prophet,² blessed and specially chosen.³ The root of this notion is “Mashiah” as it is mentioned in *The Babylonian Talmud*, and it is an Aramaic word.⁴ This notion, which has made a very deep impression in the history of humanity and has shaped some worldviews, has maintained its both significance and influence until today. This notion that has a content that represents “Eschatological Savior”⁵ has been developed in Jewish and Christian theology. The traces of this tendency, besides, can be encountered in every region and at every period of time when the hope is lost and where there is a search for a new hope.

Even though the concept of Messiah heavily a theological issue, it is a psycho-sociologic phenomenon in essence. The ideas shaped around the notion “Messiah” are formed by human’s fear and anxiety and grounded as a way of social salvation. Once various religious and cultural communities are examined, different perceptions of Messiah that are based on similar basis can be observed.⁶ In every period of the history and in every community, there have always been people who are oppressed, exploited and disregarded. Due to this oppression they urges themselves to seek for a way out. In this way, they seek for a salvation and desire to obtain a peaceful life. Sometimes they produce radical solutions with reference to their personal

¹ See Abu al-Fadl Ibn Manzur, *Lisan al-'arab* (Beirut: Dar Sadir, 1955), 2: 593.

² See Ibrahim Mustafa, *Mu'cem al-vasit* (İstanbul: Çağrı Publications, 1992), 868.

³ See Cengiz Batuk, *Tarihin Sonunu Beklemek: Ortadoğu Dinlerinde Eskatoloji Mitosları* (İstanbul: İz Yayıncılık, 2003), 67.

⁴ See Isidore Singer, *The Jewish Encyclopedia* (New York: Funk&Wagnalls Com., 1904), 8: 505.

⁵ See Batuk, *Tarihin Sonunu Beklemek*, 66 etc.

⁶ For example, further information about the Saviour Saoshyant in Ancient Persia see Joseph Campbell, *Batı Mitolojisi-Tanrı'nın Maskeleri*, trans. Kudret Emiroğlu (Ankara: İmge Kitabevi, 2003), 195 etc.; and Krishna in Ancient India and Hercules in Ancient Greece see Joseph Campbell, *Doğu Mitolojisi-Tanrı'nın Maskeleri*, trans. Kudret Emiroğlu (Ankara: İmge Kitabevi, 2003), 284 etc.; and Mahdî in Islamic tradition see Al-Tirmidhî, *Al-Sunen*, Mahdî, 2230.

abilities, and sometimes facing realities might be horrifying for them, so they may develop some kinds of defense mechanisms by escaping from them. However, the important thing is to face these realities.⁷ But not being able to show such an effort leads to people evade their responsibility and to appeal to others’ to produce a solution. Consequently, a person, who has such a consideration, expects the arrival of a divine savior who will save himself and people like him and establish justice by eliminating cruel ones, and this thought is called as “Messianism”.⁸ One who can analyze and resolve people with such backgrounds can create many legends that are engraved on minds for centuries.⁹

1. MESSIAH ACCORDING TO BIBLE

“Messianic Culture”¹⁰ has found its meaning systematically in Judaism and Christianity. Therefore, an interpretation on this issue with reference to Bible that contains both religions’ holy scripts is necessary. When this book’s wording is examined in general, it will be seen that the Old Testament and the New Testament, namely; two main divisions of this book, are exactly a history book. The first one is the history of a chosen group of people,¹¹ that is to say Jews, and the other one is the history of a chosen person¹² who comes to save people from their original sins. The understanding of Messiah is formed because of great difficulties that are encountered in this historical writing. To understand the intellectual and historical extents of Messiah correctly, it is important to approach the Old Testament and the New Testament as a whole and chronologically because while the first one makes prophecies about Messiah’s personality, attributes and future,¹³ the other one discusses the actualization of these prophecies within Jesus Christ’s essence.¹⁴ From this point of view, the Old Testament, which is also called “Tanakh”¹⁵ has a crucial value for testification of the New Testament’s claim since “Tanakh” itself is Messiah’s source of justification.

This framework of meaning that is summarized cares and prioritizes a future in which it is thought that there is the end of history or where the delayed hopes become exceedingly real instead of a past where the identity is built but not bright.¹⁶ Here this perception of history indicates that wording of Bible has an “apocalyptic” structure.

⁷ For further information see Erich Fromm, *Kendini Savunan Adam*, trans. Necla Arat (İstanbul: Say Publications, 2001).

⁸ See M. Hayri Kırbasoğlu, “Hz. İsa’yı Gökten İndiren Hadislerin Tenkidi”, *İslamiyat* 3/4 (2000): 147. And also see Mustafa Selim Yılmaz, *Kumran Yazmalarının Ahit Geleneği Çerçevesinde Değerlendirilmesi* (İstanbul: Ayısıği Kitapları, 2013), 104 etc.

⁹ See Eric Hoffer, *Kesin İnançlılar*, trans. Erkal Günür (İstanbul: İm Publications, 2005), 25 etc.; Gustave Le Bon, *Kitleler Psikolojisi* (İstanbul: Yağmur Publications, 2005), 19.

¹⁰ See Singer, *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, 8: 505–512.

¹¹ Ezekiel 37/27 etc.

¹² Luke 2/11; Hebrews 1/3 etc.

¹³ Isaiah 40/10–11; Daniel 7/13–14; Ezekiel 37 etc.

¹⁴ In fact, there are some words in the Bible such as “...so was fulfilled what was spoken.” in this context. See Matthew 13/35 etc.

¹⁵ Today, the synonym word used for the Old Testament is Torah. Actually, this usage is wrong because Torah is one of the main divisions of the Old Testament. And Torah is composed of the Five Books; Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. The other divisions are “Nevi'im” (the stories of the prophets before and after the exile) and “Ketuvim” (about the revelation of Yahweh and Jewish responses to the laws of Yahweh). For further information see Mahmut Aydın, *Anahatlarıyla Dinler Tarihi* (İstanbul: Ensar Neşriyat, 2010), 285–292.

¹⁶ See Batuk, *Tarihin Sonunu Beklemek*, 71.

The aforementioned “apocalypticism” should have found some notions that will be used by emphasizing and reinterpreting further while mentioning itself within the ambience it is included, and these should have belonged to new world order which will be formed in the future. Therefore, if one of these term is the divine sovereignty that will be formed in future, then the other one will be Messiah, title of the person who is send by God to form this sovereign. Appropriately, “apocalypticism” reevaluated and explained “malkhut” and “messiah” notions. The word malkhut, which is derived from the word “malak” that means to dominate and to reign over in Hebrew, refers to both political sovereigns in secular terms and God’s eternal and everlasting sovereigns in the Old Testament. Within the “apocalyptic” understanding, we can easily infer that the divine sovereignty is regarded pertinent to future only. The second key notion that “apocalypticism” reinterpreted is “Messiah”.¹⁷

This conceptualization generates a radical fatalism, that is to say the fulfillment of inevitably expected prophecies. Accordingly, people who suffered torture and punishment for centuries will be saved by a leader as qualified as Moses. This savior’s name is Messiah. He will purify his people from their sins,¹⁸ renew the disrupted covenant¹⁹ and lead them by the law of God.²⁰ He will save them from their troubles,²¹ endure difficulties for them,²² and thus heal them.²³ He will herd them as a good shepherd,²⁴ choose them among many nations and gather them, be their sole king and shepherd and make the lands they settled theirs forever. Thus, they will be God’s people, and He will be their God.²⁵ On the other hand, this Messiah transforms into a God who sacrifices Himself on the cross to save humanity in the New Testament.²⁶ Therefore, this understanding destroys the individuality²⁷ completely that should be essential in the religious thought, more precisely the framework of being human as being willingly and actual. It is possible to say that this thought, which follows from this perspective, is a logic in which all responsibility of a group of people is shouldered by a charismatic leader and the aforementioned people are contently submissive without questioning. This is theoretically called as “shepherd-flock” relationship in political literature.²⁸

A community’s getting used to live as slaves and thus internalizing the slavery is sort of an expression of underdeveloped sense of responsibility. However, someone appears and regards liberating the society as

¹⁷ Mehmet Paçacı, “Kur’an-ı Kerim Işığında Vahiy Geleneğine–Kitab-ı Mukaddes Bağlamında– Bir Bakış”, *İslami Araştırmalar* 5/3 (1991): 190.

¹⁸ Daniel 9/24 etc.

¹⁹ Jeremiah 31/31–34

²⁰ Jeremiah 31/33

²¹ Psalm 34/17–20 etc.

²² Psalm 69/4 etc.

²³ Isaiah 53/5 etc.

²⁴ Isaiah 40/11 etc.

²⁵ Ezekiel 37.

²⁶ Romans 8/3–4 etc.

²⁷ Here, it is not implied that the individuality is self centered and isolated from society. On the contrary, it is pointed out that the individuality based on the teachings of Qur’ān, inasmuch as Qur’ān constructs individual identity and individuals construct society and social institutions.

²⁸ An evaluation for this relation see Mohammed Abed Al-Jabri, *Al-Aql al-‘arabī al-siyāsī* (Beirut: al-Markaz as-Saqafi al-Arabi, 1991), 39–40.

a maxim, saves people with the help of God from unfavorable and hopeless situations they are in and helps them to have many blessing.²⁹ This person is Moses.³⁰ However, because they could not understand the thought of liberation that was sent via Moses, they lost the blessings they had and experienced enormous difficulties throughout the history.³¹ Having said that, the personalities of Moses and the Messengers of Allah³² who followed his path engraved in those people’s minds as a prototype. However, the historical fact reveals that this prototype was imagined in the opposite direction of the line that was oriented by tradition of the revelation. Accordingly, Moses is the perfect shepherd who takes the all responsibility, and they are a group of people who need to be directed. The emperor of Babylonia “Nebuchadnezzar’s (605-562 BC)³³ invasion” of their lands and exiling them is the milestone for Jews to form the Messiah literature based on the imagery of King David in which political power and influence is matured on the basis of Moses. Besides, they were significantly influenced by the Persians who gave them their freedom during this construction process. After they are subjected to a second exile by Romans (70 AD) and their temples were demolished, they raised this literature to its maximum level throughout this two thousand years of exile. As a result, they made the Messianic idea one of the thirteen principles of Jewish faith.³⁴ The Christians, who inherited the Messianic idea from them, on the other hand divinized this idea.³⁵

In the messianic conceptualization, it should be focused on the key word, namely; “son”, which has a theological importance. It is the most important stage in which the conceptual transformation occurred. However, it does not show similarity with the word “son” in Christian literature. On the contrary, this is used in the meaning of chosenness. In this context, it aims to justify people or person,³⁶ who were confirmed via the prophecy³⁷ in which God revealed His purposes for the world, by symbolically engendering.³⁸ Also, the use of an expression of such gratification can have a meaning when the historical experience is analyzed because to save a group of people, who were oppressed for centuries, from this psychology of oppression, a catchy rhetoric style that will motivate them is necessary. From this perspective, such an expression could

²⁹ al-A’raf 7/137–141 etc.

³⁰ al-A’raf 7/104–105 etc.

³¹ al-Ma’idah 5/20–26 etc. The clearest evidence of failure to comprehend this mentality can be seen that they said to Moses when God command them to enter the holy land due to fear from the people there: “They said, O Moses, indeed we will not enter it, ever, as long as they are within it; so go, you and your Lord, and fight. Indeed, we are remaining right here.” al-Ma’idah 5/24.

³² This term is conceptualized as “Prophets” in the western thought.

³³ The period of his sovereignty

³⁴ See Moses Maimonides, *The Code of Maimonides (Mishneh Torah) Book Two*, trans. Menachem Kellner (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004), 176; Moses Maimonides, *Dalalat Al-Hairin*, ed. Hüseyin Atay (Ankara: AÜİF Publications, 1974), 409. Besides for further information see Rabbi I. Epstein, *Judaism* (London: The Epworth Press, 1949), 77-78; David S. Ariel, *What Do Jews Believe? The Spiritual Foundations of Judaism* (New York: Schocker Books, 1995), 230-232; Louis Jacobs, *A Jewish Theology* (London: Behrman House, 1973), 292-300; Aydın, *Anahatlarıyla Dinler Tarihi*, 298 etc.

³⁵ See Paçacı, “Vahiy Geleneği’ne Bir Bakış”, 193; Yılmaz, *Kumran Yazmaları*, 36-45.

³⁶ See William H. Propp, “Chosen People”, *The Oxford Companion to the Bible*, ed. Bruce M. Metzger and et al., New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 110.

³⁷ See R. Martin Achard, “Prophecy (Old Testament)”, *Vocabulary of Bible*, ed. J. J. Von Allmen (s.l.: Lutterworth Press, 1958), 345.

³⁸ See Psalm 2/7; Ezekiel 37/23 etc.

be used in order to keep their morale high.³⁹ Also, a story that is told in John 10/22-39 supports this idea.⁴⁰ Consequently, this concept in Judaism is symbolically understood as a term that the presence of human belongs to God and there is a moral relation existing between Him and man instead of the ontological one.⁴¹ However, this notion was altered by Paul the Apostle (d. 62 AD) and Messiah was shown as a God who sacrifices Himself on cross for people’s original sins and is reborn to make pagan communities become Christian.⁴² In addition, it is important to mention the concept of “sin” in relation to the notion of “son”. According to Judaism, doing right things is because of human being’s creation, but committing sins means the corruption of his/her nature because sin means “human being’s betraying the covenant between God and himself”, which is another important conceptual framework. This covenant and thus the laws granted by God are assurances for natural life, that is to say the order of the universe. The order will be disrupted, and this will be followed by disasters when sin is committed, in other words sin will bring punishment with it. Therefore, it is vital to be protected from sins. If human being is involved in sins, it becomes a part of his nature, and salvation will not be possible without God’s help and involvement. The sinner should be sincerely and absolutely regretful to make it actual. Here sacrifice which is offered as redemption is the most important indicator of this regret, and the purpose of this is to protect whole society’s existence and order at the cost of a life.⁴³ However, with reference to the concept “son”, Christian theology transformed this conceptual framework into humanity’s ontological corruption on the basis of “the original sin”, and it is

³⁹ Additionally, the logic of the languages has been taken into consideration, because a conceptual framework has different meanings according to national mentalities. Furthermore, Judaism was surrounded by many ancient polytheistic religions in the beginning era of its cultural, spiritual and systematical construction. As a result, it was inevitable that they were influenced by the polytheist societies around them as in the sample of the concept “son”. In this inculturation process, even if Judaism borrowed some pagan terms, it did not lose its essence due to strong monotheistic emphasis in its structure. On the contrary, the Christian inculturation process was accomplished by pagans themselves. For a detailed comparison see Geza Vermes, *The Changing Faces of Jesus* (London: The Penguin Press, 2000), 263-265.

⁴⁰ Accordingly, the discussion between Jesus and the Jewish opponents in the Festival of Dedication is told. At the time of discussion, the Jewish opponents stoned Jesus. But he asked, though he showed many good works, the reason of their stoning. They said that the reason is for his blasphemy claiming to be God. By implying that he is the son of God, he provided a proof from the Jewish laws to be his righteousness: “Is it not written in your Law, ‘I have said you are “gods.”’ Apart from the discussion about the authenticity of this scene, it indicates the nature of a basic mentality: the Jewish perception of the concept of son is not within an ontological nature.

⁴¹ See Yılmaz, *Kumran Yazmaları*, 27. “The fully developed concept of election is summarized in the Palestinian Talmud by the third-century CE Galilean Rabbi Lazar. Expounding the words of Deuteronomy quoted above, he comments: ‘When the Israelites do the will of the Holy One, blessed be He, they are called sons; but when they do not do His will, they are not called sons.’” Geza Vermes, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English (Revised Edition)* (London: Penguin Books, 2004), accessed: 3 June 2018. https://archive.org/stream/pdf_Uy_BZ_QGsaLiJ4Zs/The%20Dead%20Sea%20Scrolls%20%5BComplete%20English%20Translation%5D_djvu.txt, 103.

At this point, it is useful to mention about the Dead Sea Scrolls that they were founded in 1947 and dated to ancient times between 250 BC and 70 AD. The scrolls brought a new, different and clearest perspective to the concept of son. This concept stands for being chosen. It is used to express the people that consider rightly of the matter and they are on the right path. That is to say, the Sons of Light. On the other hand, the concept of the Sons of Darkness is used for the opposites to the Sons of Light. See Vermes, *Ölü Deniz Parşömenleri*, 97 etc. Finally, it is focused on Qur’ân because it is the last ring of the revelation that finishes that kind of discussions by clearly establishing the right perspective. Qur’ân has considerable regard for good moral character instead of the chosen people or person. It also emphasizes that virtue is not hereditary, on the contrary, it is for everybody that has good moral character: “And thus we have made you a just community that you will be witnesses over the people and the Messenger will be a witness over you.” Al-Baqarah 2/143.

⁴² See Acts 17/29; Philippians 2/6; Colossians 1/16–20. And also see Mehmet Sakioğlu, *İncil’i Kim Yazdı* (İstanbul: Ozan Publications, 2004), 151 etc.; Paçacı, “Vahiy Geleneği’ne Bir Bakış”, 193. For an evaluation about the concept of son in Judaism and Christianity see Yılmaz, *Kumran Yazmaları*, 27-45.

⁴³ See Yılmaz, *Kumran Yazmaları*, 55-59.

believed that the salvation from this is via acceptance of Jesus Christ, who is announced as the son of God, as the offering of redemption.⁴⁴

In the light of these explanations, when the perception of Messiah appeared in the Old Testament and the New Testament is analyzed, the following results should be noted: According to Judaism, Messiah has not arrived yet,⁴⁵ but according to Christianity, Messiah is Jesus Christ,⁴⁶ and he fulfilled his fundamental duty that he undertook.⁴⁷

1.1. Messiah in the Old Testament

According to “Tanakh”, Messiah is a prophet, who is a sign from the Lord for Jews, and whose name is “Emmanuel”,⁴⁸ and who will arise at the Dreadful Day of the Lord.⁴⁹ He is the sprout which springs up from the stump of Jesse, and a sapling which produces fruit.⁵⁰ He is the one from the descendants of Jacob, who will reign.⁵¹ He is the one whose sovereignty will be on David’s throne.⁵² He is a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek.⁵³ He is the one who will raise the scepter from “Judah”, and the one who will not let the scepter slip through his feet.⁵⁴ He is the one who will sit beside the Lord’s right until He makes his enemies footstool of his feet.⁵⁵ He is the one who will rule as a king, act wisely and bring justice. In his time, Judah

⁴⁴ See Yılmaz, *Kumran Yazmaları*, 235 etc.

⁴⁵ For further understanding, it should be focused on the circumstance of the revelation of Ali ‘Imran 3/183 that there was discussion between Muhammad (pbuh) and the Jews of Madinah. The verse: “[They are] those who said, ‘Indeed, Allah has taken our promise not to believe any messenger until he brings us an offering which fire [from heaven] will consume.’ Say, ‘There have already come to you messengers before me with clear proofs and [even] that of which you speak. So why did you kill them, if you should be truthful?’” According to Jews, a burned offering to the Lord in the Temple is compulsory in the Law of Moses. At the time of Muhammad (pbuh), approximately 500 years passed over the destruction of the Temple and the only person offering a burned over an altar was Messiah. Because he is the only man that redeems Jews from the exile, conveys them to the Holy Land, rebuilds up the Temple and performs the aforementioned offering. Therefore, the Jews of Madinah discussed with Muhammad (pbuh) in order to know whether he is Messiah or not. On the contrary, as mentioned in the verse, the Messenger of Allah spoke the truth clearly to them and stated that they are untrustworthy to their claim. See Muhammed Esed, *Kur’an Mesajı*, trans. Cahit Koytak et al. (İstanbul: İşaret Publications, 2002), 128. After Jesus, many false Messiahs emerged during the history. Sabbatai Zevi from Izmir had especially a great effect on Jews and kept alive their hopes for a long time. Unfortunately, his declaring being a Muslim in front of the Ottoman Sultan had deeply disappointed Jews. For further information about Sabbatai Zevi see Gershom Scholem, *Sabatay Sevi “Mesih mi? Sahte Peygamber mi?”*, trans. Selahattin Ayaz (İstanbul: Burak Publications, 2001); John Freely, *Kayıp Mesih*, trans. Ayşegül Çetin Tekçi (İstanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, 2003). As a result, Jewish people are still waiting for the advent of Messiah.

⁴⁶ See Mark 1/1 etc.

⁴⁷ “God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith. He did this to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished—he did it to demonstrate his righteousness at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.” Romans 3/25–26; Matthew 1/21 etc.

⁴⁸ Isaiah 7/14 cf. Matthew 1/21, 23.

⁴⁹ See Malachi 4/5.

⁵⁰ See Isaiah 11/1.

⁵¹ See Numbers 24/19 cf. Luke 1/33.

⁵² See Isaiah 9/7.

⁵³ See Psalm 110/4.

⁵⁴ See Genesis 49/10 cf. Hebrews 7/14.

⁵⁵ See Mezmurlar 110/1.

will be saved and Israel will be safe. He will be called, “Jehovah is our righteous savior”.⁵⁶ His kingdom is expressed in prophet Daniel’s dream as follows:

“In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.”⁵⁷

Messiah will show various miracles, such as healing blinds, lames and mutes.⁵⁸ Besides, he is the one who will enter Jerusalem on a donkey and welcomed with cheers.⁵⁹ Apart from that, in addition to his enlightenment of Jews, other nations will follow his light.⁶⁰

Messiah, who has such remarkable powers, is also described as a servant who suffers for Israel. His worth will not be appreciated by his people, but later his people will repent because of their ignorance of Messiah.⁶¹ Messiah is also told in the words of Ezekiel, and these messages are given to Jews: just as Ezekiel resurrects dead bones and leads them by God’s consent, Messiah will resurrect Jews from the condition of death they are in and will bring them to life. He will gather sons of Israel from nations, make them a single nation and a steady staff in God’s hand. He is the one who will unite them so as not to be separated and become their sole king and shepherd. He will make sure that they obey God’s laws strictly, and make the lands they settled theirs forever.⁶² Accordingly, the destiny expressed as “and my dwelling place will be with them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people”⁶³ will be fulfilled.

1.2. Messiah in The New Testament

Jesus Christ is the centralized person around whom the New Testament is formed because he is the most important part of the creed of trinity. Not accepting the story that is depicted in relation to him will make the Christianity meaningless.⁶⁴ In the New Testament, the most important qualification of Jesus Christ

⁵⁶ See Jeremiah 23/5–6.

⁵⁷ Daniel 7/13–14. And also see Isaiah 11/5–6; Isaiah 11/10; Psalm 2/13–14.

⁵⁸ See Isaiah 35/5–6 cf. Matthew 9/35; Al-i ‘Imran 3/49.

⁵⁹ See Zechariah 9/9 cf. Matthew 24/4–5; Luke 19/29–38.

⁶⁰ See Isaiah 60/1–3 cf. Acts 13/47–48. There is also an important point here: The light of Messiah to the Apostle Paul and his friends; and his Kingdom to christianise people transformed. The attracting people to the light of Messiah is stated that people believe in the principles of Paul.

⁶¹ See Isaiah 53.

⁶² See Ezekiel 37.

⁶³ Ezekiel 37/24.

⁶⁴ The Dead Sea Scrolls allowed some interesting speculations about Jesus and his essence. For example: “Another influential work, *The Crucifixion by an Eye-Witness*, which appeared in German towards the end of the 19th century and in English around 1907, purported to be a genuine ancient text composed by an Essene scribe. Jesus was depicted as the son of Mary and an unnamed Essene teacher, whose fund of secret Essene medical knowledge enabled him not just to survive the Crucifixion, but also to appear to his disciples afterwards as if ‘risen from the dead’. George Moore undoubtedly drew on this work when, in 1916, he published *The Brook Kerith* and scandalised Christian readers across the Englishspeaking world. Moore, too, portrayed Jesus as a protégé of Essene thought, who survives the Crucifixion and retires to an Essene community in the general vicinity of Qumran. Here, years later, he is visited by a fanatic named Paul, who, quite unknowingly, has come to promulgate a bizarre mythologised account of his career and, in the process, promote him to godhood.” Michael Baigent – Richard Leigh, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Deception* (New York: Touchstone, 1991), 160. “‘Christianity’, as it will subsequently evolve from Paul, has by now severed virtually all connection with its roots, and can no longer be said to have anything to do with Jesus, only with Paul’s image of Jesus.” Baigent – Leigh, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Deception*, 178. Additionally, Geza Vermes depicts the Teacher of Righteousness (one of the main characters in the Scrolls) as the

is that he is the son of God. As mentioned, Jesus is descended from David,⁶⁵ and he is the beloved son of God who has His consent⁶⁶ and is given birth by a virgin⁶⁷ who got pregnant by the Holy Spirit.⁶⁸ John the Baptist has an important role in proving this matter, and he states that Jesus is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit, and testifies that he is the son of God.⁶⁹

Jesus Christ is the one who comes to save his people from their sins.⁷⁰ This salvation is not only limited to his people, but also it is extended to everyone who believes in him.⁷¹ He is the incarnation of God for this purpose.⁷² In other words, he is the son of God who arrives to be offered as redemption for humans' original sins and for justice of God and goodness of people who believe in Jesus.⁷³ Such an offering reveals a transformation of a basic thought in “Tanakh”: Imposing the redemption of mistakes made by Jews in the past on Messiah transformed into an original sin that people carried since their birth, and Messiah is transformed into an offering of sacrifice who pays the price as a result of the justice of God.⁷⁴ Hereby this conceptual evolvement is the most important indication that shows the separation of Judaism and Christianity and the last one transformed into a different religion.

According to the story told in Matthew 27/39-44,⁷⁵ Jews expect Jesus, who introduces himself as Messiah, to show some signs by the concept that is developed in “Tanakh”. However, actualization of this is not possible considering Christianity's redemption doctrine because it is necessary that Jesus dies on cross in order for God's justice to be done, and thus the destiny is fulfilled to save his believers from their sins. Therefore, even though Jesus deeply feels the pain of shouldering such responsibility,⁷⁶ he needs to complete

image of wisdom from the point of the Dead Sea Scrolls: “...the Scrolls directly impute to the Teacher a particular God-given insight into the hidden significance of prophecy. He was ‘the Teacher of Righteousness to whom God made known all the mysteries... of His servants the Prophets’ (IQp-Hab VII, 1-5). He was, ‘the Priest [in whose heart] God set [understanding] that he might interpret all the words of His servants the Prophets, through whom He foretold all that would happen to His people’ (IQp-Hab VII, 8-10). He was the Teacher who, ‘made known to the latter generations that which God had done to the latter generation, the congregation of traitors, to those who departed from the way’ (CD I, 12-13). The Teacher's interpretation alone, propagated by his disciples, offered true enlightenment and guidance.” Vermes, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English (Revised Edition)*, 101.

⁶⁵ There is an exceptional case at this point. The genealogy of Jesus is traced to David through the fiancé of Mary, Joseph instead of herself. Actually, in the Jewish tradition, it should be through the mother. See Matthew 1/1-18. It might be said that the reason for this sort of narration is adopting the easiest way to tell pagans about Jesus. Because the founder of Christianity, the Apostle Paul grew up in a pagan cultural environment.

⁶⁶ See Matthew 3/17; Luke 3/21-22 etc.

⁶⁷ See Matthew 1/18-25 etc.

⁶⁸ See Matthew, 1:18.

⁶⁹ See John 1/32-34 etc.

⁷⁰ See Matthew 3/21.

⁷¹ See Romans 3/21-24.

⁷² See Colossians 1/14-15, 17 etc.

⁷³ See Romans 3/25-26.

⁷⁴ For an explanation about the differentiation between Judaism and Christianity in terms of sin see Joseph A. Komonchak et al., *The New Dictionary of Theology* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1990), 956; Yılmaz, *Kumran Yazmaları*, 55-67.

⁷⁵ “Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, ‘You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God!’ In the same way the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders mocked him. ‘He saved others,’ they said, ‘but he can’t save himself! He’s the king of Israel! Let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God. Let God rescue him now if he wants him, for he said, ‘I am the Son of God.’ In the same way the rebels who were crucified with him also heaped insults on him.”

⁷⁶ See Matthew 22/46.

this duty by praying⁷⁷ for those who are unconscious of this responsibility. On the other hand, the Messianic thought in Christianity is isolated from the context that is formed by Judaism in relation to this world with reference to religious-political basis and presented within the framework of a totally celestial kingdom.⁷⁸

According to the expressions in Gospels, many miraculous events occurred after Jesus was crucified⁷⁹ and died:⁸⁰ Darkness falls all over the whole Earth.⁸¹ The curtain of the temple is torn into two, and the Earth quakes. The bodies of many holy people come out of their tombs and appear to many people while walking in the holy city. The Roman centurion and others who see these events confirm that Jesus is the son of God.⁸² Then Joseph from Arimathea, a rich man and disciple of Jesus, takes his body with the permission of Pilate and places Jesus in a new tomb that he has already made for himself.⁸³

Jesus resurrects after three days of his death⁸⁴ despite the all efforts⁸⁵ of the chief priests to refute his word. An angel comes down from heaven, rolls back the rock at the entrance of the tomb and sits on it.⁸⁶ The guards, who were placed at the entrance of his tomb by the chief priests to prevent a creation of myth because of the theft of Jesus' body, shake from fear of this angel and play possum.⁸⁷ Mary Magdalene and Mary the Virgin see these remarkable events. The angel knows that they come to see Jesus and charges them with the duty of informing disciples about this situation by showing where he lays. And while they are happily on the way to disciples, they meet Jesus and clasp his feet and worship him. Then Jesus sends a message via them to tell the disciples to gather in Galilee.⁸⁸ Jesus gathers with his disciples here and makes each of them prophet by blowing them the Holy Spirit.⁸⁹ Thus they are charged with gathering disciples from other people and baptizing them in the name of Father and the Holy Spirit.⁹⁰ After that, contrary to the narration in the Old Testament, Jesus is taken up into heaven and sits at the right hand of God.⁹¹ The belief of Messiah

⁷⁷ See Luke 23/34.

⁷⁸ See John 18/33–38.

⁷⁹ See Luke 19/23 vd.

⁸⁰ See Luke 23/46 vd.

⁸¹ See Matthew 27/45 etc.

⁸² See Matthew 27/51–54 etc.

⁸³ See Matthew 27/57–60.

⁸⁴ See Matthew 28/6.

⁸⁵ See Matthew 27/62–66.

⁸⁶ See Matthew 28/2.

⁸⁷ See Matthew 28/3–4. According to Christian belief, the chief priests agreed with the guardians in order to falsify the reality: “While the women were on their way, some of the guards went into the city and reported to the chief priests everything that had happened. When the chief priests had met with the elders and devised a plan, they gave the soldiers a large sum of money, telling them, ‘You are to say, ‘His disciples came during the night and stole him away while we were asleep.’ If this report gets to the governor, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble.’ So the soldiers took the money and did as they were instructed. And this story has been widely circulated among the Jews to this very day.” Matta 28/11–15.

⁸⁸ See Matthew 28/1, 5–10.

⁸⁹ Bkz. John 20/21–22.

⁹⁰ See Matthew 28/16–10.

⁹¹ See Mark 16/19; Acts 1/1–2 cf. Psalm 110/1.

that is formed in this point of view has become the basic doctrine of Christianity and formed the basis of the missionary thought, which reached today as a serious institutional structure.

2. MESSIAH ACCORDING TO QUR'ĀN

Qur'ān is the revelation which brings the tradition of the Messengers of Allah, in other words, the covenant tradition to an end.⁹² For this reason, it reveals the real knowledges about serious separations that people fall in the past and adjudicates.⁹³ Here Messiah, that is to say Jesus,⁹⁴ comes first among the principal matters in which Qur'ān removed controversies. Accordingly, Qur'ān points out a common ground, where all people can come together, by expecting people of the scripture to use the common sense.⁹⁵

According to Qur'ān, Jesus, who is the real and the only Messiah, is a human being that was born⁹⁶ without a father.⁹⁷ As mentioned in Maryam 19/21, the creation of Jesus is the symbol of Allah's love and mercy for people. His creation is not different from human's creation because the expression that is used to refer to his creation is the same as the expression that is used to refer to the creation of Adam:

”فَنَفَخْنَا فِيهَا مِنْ رُوحِنَا.”⁹⁸

Moreover, it is stated that his coming into existence is the same as that of Adam.⁹⁹

⁹² See Al-Ahzab 33/40. “Because of the universal applicability and textual incorruptibility of its teachings - as well as of the fact that [the Messenger of Allah] Muhammad is ‘the seal of all [the Messengers of Allah]’, i.e., the last of them (see 33:40) - the Qur'an represents the culminating point of all revelation and offers the final, perfect way to spiritual fulfilment.” Muhammad Asad, “The Message of the Quran”, accessed: 31 May 2018, http://www.islamicbulletin.org/services/all_ebooks_p4.aspx, 224.

⁹³ See Al-Baqarah 2/213.

⁹⁴ See Al-Ma'idah 5/72 etc.

⁹⁵ “Say, ‘O People of the Scripture, come to a word that is equitable between us and you - that we will not worship except Allah and not associate anything with Him and not take one another as lords instead of Allah.’ But if they turn away, then say, ‘Bear witness that we are Muslims [submitting to Him].’” Ali ‘Imran 3/64.

⁹⁶ Because of the birth of Jesus without father, his mother Mary was accused of unchastity by the Jews who were unable to grasp the truth. By being heralded with Jesus, then she disclosed her fear. See Maryam 19/20 etc. But Allah expressed her fear as unreasonable and calmed the frightened Mary. See Meryem 19/21 etc. Allah undertook to testify that she is the symbol of the chastity and He did this testifying through Jesus being wrapped in swaddling clothes. See Maryam 19/26–33 etc. Additionally, Allah stated that she is a proud and honest and blessed and heralded woman: “And [mention] when the angels said, ‘O Mary, indeed Allah has chosen you and purified you and chosen you above the women of the worlds. O Mary, be devoutly obedient to your Lord and prostrate and bow with those who bow [in prayer].’ That is from the news of the unseen which We reveal to you, [O Muhammad]. And you were not with them when they cast their pens as to which of them should be responsible for Mary. Nor were you with them when they disputed. [And mention] when the angels said, ‘O Mary, indeed Allah gives you good tidings of a word from Him, whose name will be the Messiah, Jesus, the son of Mary - distinguished in this world and the Hereafter and among those brought near [to Allah].’” Ali ‘Imran 3/42–45.

⁹⁷ See Maryam:19/19–22 etc.

⁹⁸ See Al-Anbiya 21/91 cf. Al-Hijr 15/29; Sad 38/72; As-Sajdah 32/9. For further understanding that point clearly, it should be focused on the interpretation of Muhammad Asad: “This allegorical expression, used here with reference to Mary's conception of Jesus, has been widely - and erroneously - interpreted as relating specifically to his birth. As a matter of fact, the Qur'an uses the same expression in three other places with reference to the creation of man in general - namely in 15:29 and 38:72, ‘when I have formed him... and breathed into him of My spirit’; and in 32:9, ‘and thereupon He forms [lit., ‘formed’] him fully and breathes lit., ‘breathed’] into him of His spirit’. In particular, the passage of which the last-quoted phrase is a part (i.e., 32:7-9) makes it abundantly and explicitly clear that God ‘breathes of His spirit’ into every human being. Commenting on the verse under consideration, Zamakhshari states that ‘the breathing of the spirit [of God] into a body signifies the endowing it with life:’ an explanation with which Razi concurs.” Asad, “The Message of the Quran”, 688.

⁹⁹ See Al-i ‘Imran 3/59.

Contrary to the expectation of human beings for the Messengers of Allah to have extraordinary personalities, Jesus' having completely human attributes is explained in this way by himself: “Peace on me the day I was born, will die and will be resurrected.”¹⁰⁰ It is stated that Jesus and his mother are saleh (good) people and not different from ordinary people: “Messiah, son of Mary, is just a Messenger of Allah: All other the Messengers of Allah passed by before him; his mother was someone who never deviated from the truth, and they both used to eat food.”¹⁰¹

“Whenever the nature of Mary's son is discussed as an example, they make a fuss for this reason and say, ‘Which one is better; our Gods or him?’” However, they make this comparison just to oppose: Yes, they are an aggressive community! As for Jesus, he is just a person. He is a servant who is honored by being a Messenger of Allah and is an example for sons of Israel. And if we wanted, we would make you, the worshippers of angels, angels that come one after another on the earth.”¹⁰²

This conceptual framework shows that the prominent figures who can be exemplary for people, that is to say the Messengers of Allah, should be human just as the ones who are the addressed by messages of the Messengers of Allah because this is the basis of showing that the principles that are wanted to be applied are applicable. With reference to this basis, those who formed false thoughts about Jesus are criticized fiercely.¹⁰³ It is stated by Jesus himself that these thoughts are definitely false.¹⁰⁴

As known, when the Muslim religious thought encountered with different cultural environments, it was affected by their religious doctrines in particular messianic culture that had an important place in their memories. It can be said that whether it is associated with Jesus or not, the verses are interpreted, and compulsory commentaries were made under this influence.¹⁰⁵ The verses of Qur'ān that stand out here are these:

- ◆ “Then Allah said, ‘O! Jesus! I will give you death, I will honor you with high spiritual ranks in my presence¹⁰⁶ and purify you by taking you out from the people who are conditioned to deny the truth.’”¹⁰⁷
- ◆ “In fact, they did not kill and crucify him, but they thought so. Truly, they have doubts about the things in which they have different opinions. In this matter, they have no other information than doubt. They did not know it for sure, on the contrary, Allah raised him to Himself. Allah is omnipotent and omniscient.”¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁰ Maryam 19/33.

¹⁰¹ Al-Ma'idah 5/75.

¹⁰² Az-Zukhruf 43/57–60.

¹⁰³ See At-Tawbah 9/30–31 etc.

¹⁰⁴ See Al-Ma'idah 5/116–118.

¹⁰⁵ For very strong criticism of this point see Mahmut Şeltut, “Hz. İsa'nın Göğe Yükseltilmesi ve Tekrar Dönüşü”, trans. Mustafa Baş, *Dini Araştırmalar* 7/21 (2005): 291 etc.

¹⁰⁶ Mustafa Öztürk, *Kur'an-ı Kerim Meali: Anlam ve Yorum Merkezli Çeviri* (İstanbul: Düşün Publications, 2013), 80.

¹⁰⁷ Ali 'Imran 3/55.

¹⁰⁸ An-Nisa 4/157–158. From the sources of tafsir, Mustafa Öztürk said that “ما قتله يقيناً” stands for “blinding the matter entirely.” This is an idiomatic usage. See Öztürk, *Kur'an-ı Kerim Meali: Anlam ve Yorum Merkezli Çeviri*, 139.

- ◆ “... You are the one who watch over them once You give me death...”¹⁰⁹

The derivative of the word “death” in Al-Ma’idah 5/117 is interpreted as Jesus’ death after his coming down from heaven at a time close to doomsday. In fact beyond this, the verb “decease/تَوَفَّيْتَنِي” is used for putting Jesus into sleep by many commentators (mufasssirun) and provided as a basis for the legend of ascension.¹¹⁰ On the other hand, the expression “to raise someone up to / رَفَعَ” is interpreted as the ascension of Jesus.¹¹¹

If these interpretations are carefully examined, it will be seen that the Messiah concept in the Bible was effective in their propositions. However, when the basic principles of Qur’ān are taken into consideration, it is more precise to interpret these statements in this way: Allah makes a promise to Jesus: to make his glory great, to honor him¹¹² and not leave him to die in the hands of disbelievers. Allah has kept this promise in the best way.¹¹³

These verses of Qur’ān are also used as evidences for coming down of Jesus:

- ◆ “And there is no one among the People of the Scripture who do not apprehend the truth about Jesus at his time of death, and Jesus himself will witness against them during the Day of Resurrection.”¹¹⁴
- ◆ “He is a sign that announces the arrival of the Day of Resurrection...”¹¹⁵

Above all, it is necessary to interpret the verses wholly and in a way that is not contrary to basic logic of Qur’ān.¹¹⁶ Accordingly, the contexts of verses should be taken into account. It is mentioned before the verse that Jesus was rescued from his enemies, and the People of the Scripture’s lack of information or mistakes they made for any reason are criticized and immediately followed by this verse of Qur’ān. Therefore, the People of the Scripture of those times will eventually learn the truth. However, the damage will already be done. According to another thought, it is stated that this perception of truth will be like the removal of curtain and sighting of reality.¹¹⁷

¹⁰⁹ al-Ma’idah 5/117.

¹¹⁰ See Mehmet Ünal, “Tefsir Kaynaklarına Göre Hz. İsa’nın Ölümü, Ref’i ve Nüzulü Meselesi”, *İslamiyat* 3/4 (2000): 137 etc.

¹¹¹ See Şeltut, “Hz. İsa’nın Göğe Yükseltilmesi”, 291 etc.; Recep Önal, *Ebû Mansûr el-Mâtürîdî’ye Göre İslam Dışı Dinler* (Bursa: Emin Publications, 2013), 339-344.

¹¹² “The verb rafa ahu (lit., ‘he raised him’ or ‘elevated him’) has always, whenever the act of raf’ (‘elevating’) of a human being is attributed to God, the meaning of ‘honouring’ or ‘exalting.’ Nowhere in the Qur’an is there any warrant for the popular belief that God has ‘taken up’ Jesus bodily, in his lifetime, into heaven.” Asad, “The Message of the Quran”, 200.

¹¹³ See Şeltut, “Hz. İsa’nın Göğe Yükseltilmesi”, 293-294.

¹¹⁴ An-Nisa 4/159. “... the pronoun in the word ‘u’ is not the pronoun of third person, but, it is the demonstrative pronoun that means ‘this’. It refers to the aforementioned claim of the Jews about Jesus. Accordingly, the verse points out that everyone of the People of the Scripture resists on blasphemy never give up their distorted beliefs and claims about Jesus until their death.” Öztürk, *Kur’an-ı Kerim Meali: Anlam ve Yorum Merkezli Çeviri*, 139.

¹¹⁵ al-Zukhruf 43/61.

¹¹⁶ “For understanding a verse from Qur’ān, it should be focused on these frameworks: 1- The framework of the verse, 2- The framework of the before and the after of the verse, 3- The integrity of Qur’ān, 4- The framework of the physical and social codes in the universe and 5- The framework of common sense.” Ahmet Akbulut, “Allah’ın Takdiri – Kulun Tedbiri”, *Ankara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 33/1 (1994): 138-139.

¹¹⁷ See Ünal, “Tefsir Kaynaklarına Göre Hz. İsa’nın Ölümü”, 143-144; Öztürk, *Kur’an-ı Kerim Meali: Anlam ve Yorum Merkezli Çeviri*, 139; Önal, *Mâtürîdî’ye Göre İslam Dışı Dinler*, 282-289.

The pronoun “هـ”, which is in the verse that starts with the statement “وَإِنَّهُ لَعِلْمٌ لِلسَّاعَةِ”, is attributed to Jesus, and this verse is shown as an evidence for his arrival on the Hour. However, making such an interpretation causes the matter to deviate from the context. While Qur’ān tells its principles to people, it uses some kind of examples, logical reasons and stories, and right after it states that it is a guide which shows the right way. Accordingly, when the aforementioned verse is taken into account, it will be seen that wrong ideas of polytheists about Jesus and angels are systematically refuted and the principle is applied: The straightforward way is the way that is set by Qur’ān, and for this reason it is necessary to be subjected to it, so the aforementioned pronoun “هـ” refers to Qur’ān.¹¹⁸

The purpose of Jesus’ being a Messenger of Allah is to verify the Torah, which arrived before him, to herald a Messenger of Allah whose name is “Ahmad”¹¹⁹, who will arrive after him, and to inform that something that were made forbidden are lawful.¹²⁰ In addition, Jesus is supported with miracles, for example he makes a bird out of clay and breaths into it and this bird springs to life by Allah’s consent. He heals blinds and leprosy, and resurrects the dead again by Allah’s consent.¹²¹ However, these miracles have been interpreted as a sign of Jesus’ godhood in Christianity. Theologians have put forward counter arguments against this claim since first periods and formed a serious tradition of criticism with reference to the principle “miracle’s being an act of Allah¹²² that proves the nubuwwa of the Messenger of Allah”.¹²³

More accurate approaches can be developed if Ali ‘Imran 3/49 is considered in terms of the loop in the historical process and generally the Messengers of Allah’ spiritually bringing people to life. Essentially, the purpose of this matter can be interpreted as channeling the understating of Messiah which is formed by Jews throughout the history to an accurate direction and saving them from the bad condition they are in. From this perspective, the symbolic interpretation of the aforementioned miracles will help the matter to be enlightened and the circle to be completed. Accordingly, the bird image generally represents “fate” or “fortune” both in its usage before Islam and in Qur’ān.¹²⁴ For this reason, if Jews follow him, he will change their unfortunate fates with the power of the revelation and understating granted to him.¹²⁵ On the other hand, Jesus, with this aspect, will bring unhealthy, blind and dead minds and hearts to life.¹²⁶

However, despite all efforts made by Jesus, his truth and message was not able to comprehend, and Jews and Christians conflicted with each other. In other words, although it is clearly revealed to Jews by Allah himself, that Jesus is certainly the Messiah, the Messenger of Allah, whose arrival has been expected

¹¹⁸ See Esed, *Kur’an Mesajı*, 1006. And also see Öztürk, *Kur’an-ı Kerim Meali: Anlam ve Yorum Merkezli Çeviri*, 677.

¹¹⁹ See As-Saf 61/6.

¹²⁰ See Ali ‘Imran 3/50.

¹²¹ See Ali ‘Imran 3/49.

¹²² For example, see Abu Mansur Al-Mâtürîdî, *Tawilat al-Qur’ân*, ed. Ahmed Vanlioğlu et al. (İstanbul: Mizan Publications, 2005), 2: 308-309; Abu Al-Hasan Al-Ash’arî, *Usul ahl al-Sunnah wa al-jama’ah*, ed. Muhammad Sayyid Al-Juleind (s.l.: Cairo: 1987), 45-46; Abu Al-Mu’in al-Nasafî, *Tabsira al-adillah fi Usul al-dîn*, ed. Hüseyin Atay et al. (Ankara: DİB, 2003), 2: 31 etc.; Qadi Abd Al-Jabbar, *Sharh al-usul al-khamsah*, ed. Ahmed b. Al-Husseini, trans. İlyas Çelebi (İstanbul: TYEKB, 2013), 1: 431 etc.; Sa’d Al-Din Al-Taftazanî, *Sharh al-maqasid*, ed. Abdurrahman Umeyra (Beirut: Alam Al-Kutub, 1419/1998), 5: 12 etc.

¹²³ For an evaluation of this point see Önal, *Ebû Mansûr el-Mâtürîdî’ye Göre İslam Dışı Dinler*, 311-319.

¹²⁴ Esed, *Kur’an Mesajı*, 99.

¹²⁵ See Al-Ma’idah 5/110.

¹²⁶ See Esed, *Kur’an Mesajı*, 99.

for centuries by them, they refused him.¹²⁷ This matter, which is used as a basic argument of the conflict of Greek-Hebrew thought¹²⁸ is a sort of secret reason of the separation of Judaism and Christianity, lost its real meaning with the belief of Christianity, and the aforementioned miracles were accepted as a sign of being a God and thus they isolated Jesus from his original personality and rendered him meaningless. However, because Qur’ān is the last revelation, it explained the truth in this matter and cleared the way for those who want to develop a correct understanding.

CONCLUSION

In messianic thoughts that are formed in historical process, the fact that the weaknesses of people are concealed and canalized to a direction that is desired by some people, attracts the attention. Besides, these aimed to make people, who are disappointed, bear all difficulties and look at the future with hope. Thus, the history of Jews, as told in the Old Testament, is the best example of this fact. This fact, which later resulted in a failure of meaning, is transformed into an expression of divine identity with Christianity.

Qur’ān, which is the last ring of the revelation tradition, stands out in this matter with its confirmation and corrections. Thus, when the relevant verses are examined, it is seen that the purpose is to form a real Messiah concept and to remove the obstacles on individual activity and productivity. The purpose is essentially to prevent people from attributing an identity that makes Muhammad’s identity meaningless as in the example of Jesus by repeating the same mistakes in the past.¹²⁹ Islamic thought, which continues to develop thanks to the companions of the Messenger of Allah generally, considerably progressed in establishment of such an understanding. Moreover, the Islamic civilization that contribute to humanity is the best example of this.

In addition to this, in the process of time the messianic concept of ancient traditions has been settled into Islamic thought with some sort of changes. If the current condition of Muslim world is taken into consideration, these kinds of thoughts will mean providing opportunity for the “Salvation Theory” that may cause the loss of identity for human contrary to the being a Messenger of Allah’s perspective that is essentially based on forming the human indirectly.¹³⁰ Consequently, with reference to expressions stated in verses, such as Az-Zukhruf 43/60, Al-Ma’idah 5/75, etc., it will be easily understood that accepting Jesus as one of us, but as a moral person, who directs us to principles that brings us to life, is a more accurate approach. Because belief in all the Messengers of Allah, per se, is an essential requirement of Islam,¹³¹ an accurate concept related to Jesus that will be introduced in the right way will contribute to the progress in the perception of the being a Messenger of Allah as a model that develops human beings.

¹²⁷ For an evaluation of the aforementioned miracles of Jesus happened by the favour of Allah and as a sign for his being a Messenger of Allah see Abu Ja’far Muhammad al-Tabarī, *Jami’ al-bayan ‘an ta’wil ay al-Qur’an*, ed. Abdullah b. Abdul Muhsin Al-Turkī (Cairo: Dar Hija, 1422/2001), 5: 418-430.

¹²⁸ See Yılmaz, *Kumran Yazmaları*, 5 etc.

¹²⁹ See al-Tawbah 9/30-33. And also see Al-Bukharī, *Ahādith Al-Anbiya*, 48 (3445).

¹³⁰ See Avni İlhan, *Mehdilik* (İstanbul: Beyan Publications, 1993), 143–144. And also see Batuk, *Tarihin Sonunu Beklemek*, 135.

¹³¹ See al-Baqarah 2/285 etc.

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